



OFFICE OF CITY COUNCIL

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To: Governor Tom Wolf, Allegheny County Delegation of the Pennsylvania State Senate, and Allegheny County Delegation of the Pennsylvania State House of Representatives

From: Members of Pittsburgh City Council

Re: Opposition to Budget Amendment Outlawing Municipal Action on Plastic Bags and Styrofoam Containers

Date: June 27, 2019

As Members of Pittsburgh City Council, we are writing in opposition to the eleventh-hour budget amendment to prevent municipalities from instituting a ban, tax, or fee on the plastic bags, Styrofoam containers, and other packaging that languish in landfills for decades, pollute our waterways, and litter our hillsides, roadsides, and neighborhoods.

We strongly oppose this preemption bill that impinges on municipal autonomy granted under the Environmental Rights Amendment in Pennsylvania Constitution.

In addition to upholding the municipal independence granted under the Pennsylvania Constitution, the Commonwealth has an obligation to improve the state's environment and the health of its residents. As such, state government should not interfere with cities, townships, and boroughs seeking to reduce waste, beautify its communities, and prevent harm to wildlife.

Municipalities have and should continue to have the authority to implement programs designed to decrease our reliance on plastic bags, Styrofoam, and other materials that can take hundreds of years to decompose, injure and kill animals, contaminate Pennsylvania's natural beauty, and damage sanitation and stormwater infrastructure. Single use of these materials affect local health and wellness, and municipalities have the legal authority to encourage responsible consumption and reduce dependence on them.

We are staunchly opposed to this preemption bill, and we respectfully ask for your negative vote. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Erika Strassburger
District 8

Bruce A. Kraus
District 3

Corey O'Connor
District 5

Deborah Gross
District 7

Anthony Coghill
District 4

Theresa Kail-Smith
District 2

R. Daniel Lavelle
District 6

Rev. Ricky Burgess
District 9

Darlene Harris
District 1